

Great Beginnings

Artist: Beverly Stucker Precious

Bellevue Branch Library

Nashville, TN



Great Beginnings, funded through Nashville's Percent for Public Art program, includes fragments of twenty-four opening sentences from literature suggested by library patrons. For reference, the full sentences, works of literature, and authors are listed below. More information on the public art collection can be found at publicart.nashville.gov.

	FULL FIRST SENTENCES	TITLE OF BOOK/POEM	AUTHOR
1	Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.	<i>Anna Karenina</i>	Leo Tolstoy
2	Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show.	<i>David Copperfield</i>	Charles Dickens
3	All grown-ups were once children--although few of them remember.	Preface from <i>The Little Prince</i>	Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
4	Ships at a distance have every man's wish on board.	<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>	Nora Zeale Hurston
5	Some years later, on a tugboat in the Gulf of Mexico, Joe Coughman's feet were placed in a tub of cement.	<i>Live by Night</i>	Dennie Lehane
6	All children, except one, grow up.	<i>Peter Pan</i>	J.M. Barrie
7	The eyewitness said he didn't actually see it happen.	<i>A Wanted Man</i>	Lee Child
8	Where's Papa going with that ax?	<i>Charlotte's Web</i>	E. B. White
9	"Tom!"	<i>The Adventure of Tom Sawyer</i>	Mark Twain
10	Mr. Duffy lived a short distance from his body.	<i>Dubliners</i>	James Joyce
11	The cold passed reluctantly from the earth, and the retiring fogs revealed an army stretched out on the hills, resting.	<i>The Red Badge of Courage</i>	Stephen Crane
12	Call me Ishmael.	<i>Moby Dick</i>	Herman Melville
13	I am an invisible man.	<i>Invisible Man</i>	Ralph Ellison
14	It was love at first sight.	<i>Catch 22</i>	Joseph Heller
15	In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit.	<i>The Hobbit</i>	J.R.R. Tolkien
16	Death is my beat. I make my living from it.	<i>The Poet</i>	Michael Connelly
17	It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.	<i>A Tale of Two Cities</i>	Charles Dickens
18	In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.	<i>Genesis</i>	Moses
19	I think that I shall never see--a poem as lovely as a tree.	<i>Trees</i>	Joyce Kilmer
20	It was Autumn... the air was crisp and the leaves were changing colors before falling to decorate the grass with their crunchiness.	<i>Otis Goes to School</i>	Ashley Bramlett
21	It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i>	Jane Austen
22	If you are a dreamer, come in, if you are a dreamer, a wisher, a liar, a hope-er, a pray-er, a magic bean buyer...If you are a pretender come sit by my fire For we have some flax-golden tails to spin.	"Invitation," from <i>Where the Sidewalk Ends</i>	Shel Silverstein
23	He was an inch, perhaps two, under six feet, powerfully built, and he advanced straight at you with a slight stoop of the shoulders, head forward, and a fixed from-under stare which made you think of a charging bull.	<i>Lord Jim</i>	Joseph Conrad
24	Once upon a time there were four little Rabbits, and their names were—Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-tail, and Peter.	<i>The Tale of Peter Rabbit</i>	Beatrix Potter